12.00 hrs.

RE BOFORS ISSUE

[*English*]

MR SPEAKER Please take your seats We have agreed to take up the Bofors issue first and then the Bihar issue later on There are some other issues also and we will take them up It was agreed in the question House and that is why I am just allowing the Member who wants to speak on Bofors

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Midnapore) Sir, are you a not allowing the Ayodhya issue? It is also a very serious matter

MR SPEAKER I have already said that we will take up other issues also

(*Interruptions*)

MR SPEAKER I have said that not only two issues, but other issues also will be taken up I have the information from the senior Members and I am going to allow them

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh) Mr Speaker, Sir, I will be very brief as the issues involved will be covered more extensively tomorrow as was pointed out by my leader Shri L.K Advani There has to be separation between a full discussion on Bofors which is to take place tomorrow and clarifications on the clarifications which was provided by Shri Madhavsinh Solanki yesterday Even yesterday's clarification given by the Minister for External Affairs was in response to what I and some other friends had sought I must submit to you that there are some very exceptional features of this clarification that the hon Minister provided last evening and as is the custom of the House, we could not comment on that last evening.

Sir, at the very outset, I would like to place it on record that ever since this scandal of Bofors broke out in 1987, last evening's clarification by the hon Minister is the first ever candid, open and honest answer Even if that candid, open and honest answer is an admission of incompitence, this is the only honest answer that we have received from the treasury benches ever since Bofors broke out and I would like to commend the hon Minister for External Affairs for being so open and honest about what he has done What has he said? He says I meet a lawyer who gives me a piece of paper, I did not read it, I merely scanned it and I then handed it over to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Government of Switzerland Yet, again I commend the Minister for his candour, but so many questions are begged Firstly, this lawyer is not known to him The hon Minister says that he does not know as to who this lawyer is He also says that he does not have with him the text of what he has formally handed over to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland The Minister has taken that the person who met him is actually a lawyer and that he is an Indian How is it known that he is actually a lawyer and not somebody impersonating as a lawyer? What is really pertinent and which perhaps the hon Minister can inform us about is, through whom did this alleged lawyer, this so-called lawyer receive an introduction to the hon Minister After all, the hon Minister is on an official visit to Switzerland

Not everyone can just have access to him, leave alone handing over perhaps to be handed over in turn to somebody else Through whom did the hon Minister receive introduction to this so-called lawyer? We must first of all come to know who is this lawyer, through whom did he receive the introduction?

MR SPEAKER Will it not be possible to

raise all these issues tomorrow?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: No, Sir. I submitted in the beginning that we have to establish a separation between the clarification on the clarifications provided yesterday and tomorrow's debate.

Tomorrow's debate is on the more substantial, comprehensive aspect of the totality of the scandal of Bofors.

MR. SPEAKER: Can't we not touch upon these points also?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: These are specific on what the hon.Minister of External Affairs has said.

A note has been given to the hon Minister, who merely reads it not-even reads it-he scans through it and passes it on. I did say that the hon. Minister has conducted himself with a rare honesty and candour and I commend the hon. Minister for that. But he also unfortunately comes across as a person of gullibility amounting to the Minister for External Affairs becoming almost simple in his appoarch to a complex issue like Bofors. He is not merely a representative of the Government of India or the Treasury Benches when he is on a visit abroad like that. He is a representative of India. Therefore, whatever he does whether he is meeting lawyers or so-called lawyer or passing on paper, he is doing this on behalf of India.

That is why, before tomorrow's discussion he must come out and the following four or five things must be done.

First of all, as the leader of my Party, hon. Shri Advani has already said, the Government of India must take amends for this great blunder and inform us about what it has done to make those amends how it has made those amends.

Secondly, the Government of India must yet again inform the Swiss authorities about the seriousness of the Treasury Benches to pursue relentlessly investigation into Bofors.

Thirdly, before tomorrow's discussion, we have to come to know who is this so-called lawyer, his antecedents, his connection and how and through whom did the so-called lawyer reach the Minister.

Fourthly, we must come to have the text of this memorandum handed over to the hon. Minister who in turn like has been said earlier by my leader, acted merely as a messenger to the so-called lawyer. We must have the text of the memorandum. If the text is not available with the Government or with the hon.Minister, it can certainly be sent for from the Switzerland

Finally, the Government must dissociate itself with the text of this Memorandum submitted to Switzerland. Only then, can tomorrow's discussion be meaningful.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it appears the haunt of Bofors is still riding on some of the hon. Members from the Opposition. Yesterday also this matter was raised and the hon. Minister of External Affairs has made a statement also. In your wisdom you have allowed a full discussion tomorrow. Thereafter again raising these issues, again using the same thing, using the same words and the same language will not help anybody. Whatever the hon. Members want to say, they can say them tomorrow when the discussion is to take place.

That can be raised tomorrow. You have rightly observed that these matters can be discussed tomorrow. Therefore, raising it again and again. there is no other intention except that it is politically motivated. They want to malign the Government. Though they were in the Government for 11 months,

they did not find anything out of it They could not come out to the people with any thing The very intention of some of the Members from the Opposition is just to malign the Government and to create confusion among the people in this matter

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) Before the Question Hour also we raised this issue and we wanted to suspend the Question Hour considering the importance of this issue Yesterday also we raised it and we wanted to know about it when the Minis ter of External Affairs made the statement

I would like to quote from his statement

I made a courtesy call on Mr Felber Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs At the end of our conversation while taking his leave I handed over a note to Mr Febler

MR SPEAKER Acharaji there are already issues to be discussed You have to be very brief That statement is available to everybody Come to the point

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA This is very important What was the conversation he had with Mr Felber? After completing his conversation he handed over the note and he got that note from a lawyer The identity of the lawyer was not disclosed yesterday

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY (Katwa) He can give a description and somebody can print it!

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA What was there in that note? He had not gone through that also He has not stated here It is very important because we will have a full fledged discussion tomorrow in this House

Unless the contents and text of the note is available the discussion will not be fruitful

That is why yesterday also we de-manded and today also we are demanding that the note which was handed over to the Chancellor by the External Affairs Minister should be laid on the Table of the House

That should be made available to the Members today only

It is a very serious matter It is not a very light matter

That is why we are demanding that that note should be laid on the Table of the House and that should be made available to the Members of this House so that we can know what was there in that note (*Interruptions*)

MR SPEAKER I will allow either Shri Ram Vilas Paswanji or Shri Srikanta Jena one of the two

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Rosera) Mr Speaker Sir with reference to submis sion made by Shri Manoranjan Bhakta I would like to say that the ghost of Bofors is still casting a spell on the Government and it will force the government to reveal the truth and then the country would come to know all about it I think that the Chair will also agree to this point (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA Who stopped you? All papers are with you

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN Tomor row I will let you know the facts that we gathered in our 11 months rule The present Government is also aware of our achieve ments in this regard I want to submit only one point in this regard This is a question of dignity of the House and the prestige of the

Government is also linked with it. This matter is not related to Shri Solanki alone but it is related to the Government as a whole. If the Minister for External Affairs has to quit on this score, the Prime Minister or for that matter the whole Council of Ministers should resign. Only Minister of External Affairs should not be made scape goat on this account. I want to know about the letter. It was clearly said that it was related to Bofors deal. Had it been related to other matters, we would not have care much. The letter given by the minister of External Affairs of India to his Switzerland counterpart through a private person was related to Bofors deal. In such circumstances, the House has every right to know the full facts of the matter. Unless the letter is laid on the Table of the House, the discussion is meaningless. Through you, I make a demand that the Government should be asked to lay the letter on the Table of the House, only then further action should be taken.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Is there any response from the Government? Tomorrow we are going to discuss. So, today it is not necessary that all Members should speak.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): It is agreed that there should be a discussion tomorrow.

RE: NOTICE ABOUT MOTION OF CENSURE AGAINST THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

[*English*]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Muzaffarnagar): I have given a notice this morning about the motion of censure against the Minister of External Affairs. What has happened to my notice?

MR. SPEAKER: I have not received your notice.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I have given notice under Rule 184.

MR. SPEAKER: It has not come to my notice.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: You must listen to me. I have given you a regular notice under the rules.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. If you have given the notice, it should come to me. If it has not come to me, I cannot say what stand I am taking without reading your notice. It is one thing. Secondly, we are going to discuss this matter tomorrow. At length you can do it.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: You cannot talk about this tomorrow. (*Interruptions*).

I have given a notice at 9.30 a.m. this morning I have given a notice of a motion of Censure.

MR. SPEAKER: I have not received it

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES I have given it Your Secretariat should know of it I have personally handed over at 9.30 a m this morning I have got a copy of that notice.

MR. SPEAKER Under what rule you gave that notice?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Under rule 184, I have given a notice.